**<http://www.astronomy.com/en/News-Observing/News/2011/11/New%20NASA%20missions%20to%20investigate%20how%20Mars%20turned%20hostile.aspx>**

# New NASA missions to investigate how Mars turned hostile

Named after the Roman God of war, Mars, the planet that looks like a spot of blood in our universe deserves a name no better. The planets hostile environment is unlivable for any earth organism. The Red Planet’s thin atmosphere does little to shield the ground against radiation from the Sun and space. Harsh chemicals, like hydrogen peroxide, permeate the soil. You would never expect such a harsh planet was actually once, billions of years ago, a much more inviting place. There are traces of dry riverbeds carved into the planet. Spacecraft sent to orbit Mars have found patches of minerals that form only in the presence of liquid water. It appears that in its youth, Mars was a place that could have harbored life with a thicker atmosphere warm enough for rain that formed lakes or even seas! In 2013 we plan on sending a space ship to understanding the red planet’s atmosphere in order complete the Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution (MAVEN) mission. This will help determine what caused the martian atmosphere and water to be lost to space, making the climate unlivable for life.

It would be AMAZING if we could found out a way to make mars a home planet to live on. If a planet was once able to live on, maybe we can find a way to make it livable again. The traces of waterbeds and even beds as large as the sea are an outstanding discovery. Since Mars was once a lot like Earth, we should find out what made it dry up and be the way it is so our Earth will not have to be in Mars’s condition billions of years from now. Hopefully the mission in 2013 will give a better understanding on this mysterious planet. In that mission I hope we find out why mars is the way it is, and what happened to the atmosphere to make it so thin and not capable of holding water for it to rain. Mars is an amazing planet, and we have only scratched the surface on its history.